# How to Make a Homeschool Schedule

**Three Parts:** Setting Goals  Making a Schedule that Works for You  Sticking to Your Schedule

Homeschooling your children can be fun and rewarding and help your bond with your children grow even stronger. However, homeschooling can also be overwhelming if you are not prepared. There are so many different things you can teach your children and only so many days in a year. Creating a schedule will help take this stress away. Set goals for your children, make a schedule that works for you, and stick to your schedule to help make homeschooling a positive and beneficial experience for you and your children.

## Part 1 Setting Goals

1 **Look at your state laws.** In the United States, different states have different laws for homeschooling. Some states such as Texas, Alaska, and Michigan have little or no requirements regarding structure and progress. Other states such as Massachusetts and New York have much stricter requirements. First look at these laws so you can determine how much freedom you have and what standards you need to meet.[1]

- Homeschooling is legal in the United States, but it is not in every country. Check the laws in your country to find out if you can homeschool your children and the laws you need to follow to create a homeschool schedule.

2 **Set overall goals for your children.** Start by creating your yearly goals. Determine the subjects you want to cover and what aspects of them you want to get through before the end of the year. You might want to cover a little bit of each subject throughout the year or focus heavily on one particular subject this year and another subject the next year.[2]

- Breakdown your yearly goals into monthly, weekly, and daily goals to determine how you are going to achieve your overall plan.
- Create goals such as, “learn about the Civil War" and "learn long division.”

3 **Keep your goals realistic and specific.** Make sure your goals are realistic and attainable. Don’t expect to be able to teach your children everything about a subject in just a year. Be optimistic but also realistic about your goals. Don’t have vague goals such as getting though a textbook. Make the goals specific.

- For example: “learn the multiplication tables," "master cursive," and "learn the water cycle."[3]

4 **Set goals for yourself.** As the teacher and parent, it is important to set goals for yourself too, not just your children. When you create goals for your children also create goals for what you want to accomplish to improve your teaching.

- For example, if last year it was difficult for you not to get impatient about redundant questions, make a goal to overcome this and be more patient with your children.
- Think of any improvements you want to make not only as a teacher but also as a parent.[4]

5 **Think about how much input you want your child to have.** You might have big goals for your child, but they might not feel the same way. Are you going to be stern with your child about sticking to goals or are you going to give them freedom in deciding what they want to learn? Consider making your goals checklist with your child to find a good balance.[5]

- Ask your child what they want to learn for the year, give them options, or ask about their interests so they have a say in the curriculum.

6 **Look for resources online.** Look online for lesson planning resources, schedule makers, and homeschool progress tracking systems. You can use these resources to create your schedule or to get ideas for your own homeschool plan.[6]

7 **Talk to other parents for resources and guidance.** Talk to other parents homeschooling their children for advice, support, and guidance. You can get ideas from other parents and have people to talk to about the experiences you have as a homeschool parent. If you don't know anyone who homeschools their kids, you can look for homeschool support groups in your area online.[7]

## Part 2 Making a Schedule that Works for You

1 **Work around your family's unique situation.** Your family's particular circumstances and structure will probably impact your homeschool schedule. You can schedule when you teach your children based on when your children learn best, when you are able to teach, and when you don't have other commitments.[8]

- Take your children's strengths, needs, and personality into consideration when making your schedule. You might need to make different schedules for each of your children.

2 **Determine the hours you want to have school.** You can have a set time each day for school or you can have school blended in throughout the day. Some parents might want every detail of school to be organized. If this is the case, a set time each day will be helpful. Determine how many days a week you want to have school, then set the times each day that work for you.

- If you work best with a flexible and unstructured schedule, you might not need to determine daily hours for school.[9]
- Check your state requirements to see how many "classroom" hours your children need to have.

3 **Do something different than the traditional school system.** Homeschooling allows you to do the system that you want to do. This could mean that instead of the usual "nine months on then three months off" system, that you homeschool your kids all 12 months out of the year. You can do this by teaching for six weeks then taking one week off or by simply having less in school time each day or each week. This helps take away stress and can stop you from cramming too much into each day.[10]

4 **Keep the schedule fresh.** Routine can be great, but don't be afraid to mix up your schedule. The great thing about homeschooling is that you can teach by doing something out of the box. Break up the traditional in class learning by going on nature walks, going to museums, growing vegetables in the garden, playing games, or working on projects. You can do this sporadically or make a set day of the week, such as Friday, to use as a fun day.[11]

5 **Make a daily checklist.** Before you make a schedule, create a checklist of tasks you want to complete each day. You might find that you don't actually need a strict schedule for your particular situation and just want to use the checklist for your daily progress. You can use this checklist to keep your kids on track each day.[12]

- For example: "learn about President Truman," "memorize the multiplications of 3," "learn the parts of the cell."

6 **Create your schedule.** If you need a strict schedule you can plan out what and when you want to accomplish your daily tasks. You can use a large calendar or poster board so everyone can see the daily schedule, a planner if you want the schedule just for yourself, or technology (such as Google Calendar) to structure each day.

- Your schedule does not have to be only about schoolwork. You can also schedule chores and errands into the day.

## Part 3 Sticking to Your Schedule

1 **Take some alone time before you begin school.** In the morning, take some time to yourself to have a cup of coffee, go on a walk, or lay in your bed to gather your thoughts. Look at your daily tasks and think about how you

want to accomplish them. Giving yourself this time each day to prepare and think will help you stay more motivated to stick to your schedule.[13]

2 **Have your children mark off the daily goals as they go.** Copy down the daily tasks onto a poster board, white board, or chalk board so everyone can see what the daily goals are. Have your children check off each task as it is completed to encourage them to stay motivated too. If they see what they need to do each day, they will be more inclined to get it done.[14]

- For example, once you finish teaching your children the different bones in the body, have them check it off the daily task list.

3 **Keep things consistent.** Although you might not be the type of person to have a strict schedule, still try to keep things fairly consistent. If one day you are having school in the morning then they next day it is in the evening, this might confuse your kids and make them less likely to be motivated to learn. Consistency will also help your children be more disciplined, which will help them in the long run.[15]

4 **Be flexible.** Once you make a schedule, you might realize you can't always stick to it. Commitments change and situations come up. You might have to adjust your schedule as time progresses and life happens. Try to stick to your schedule, but don't be afraid to rewrite it, change your goals, or start completely over part way through the year.[16]

5 **Make school time only about school.** Although flexibility is important, be firm about your schedule too. When it is school time, make it be only school time. Don't make appointments, take phone calls, or have guests over during school time. Treat it as if you were at a public or private school, not at your home.[17]

- For example, don't schedule a doctor's appointment right in the middle of "classroom time" and mess up your schedule.

6 **Make up for lost time.** Sometimes things come up that can mess up your schedule such as illness or unexpected commitments. When this happens you can make up for lost time by having school for more hours or on weekends until you catch up. You can also extend the length of the school year a few extra days into summer.

## Tips

- There are homeschool scheduling templates available online.
- Consider creating schedules for children individually if you have a large family or children with large age differences.

## Sources and Citations

1. https://www.hslda.org/laws/
2. http://amongstlovelythings.com/how-to-simplify-schedule/
3. http://www.homeschoolcreations.net/2013/04/homeschool-basics-setting-goals-and-knowing-your-purpose/

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